

West Hartford Substance Abuse Prevention Commission (SAPC)
Meeting Minutes
February 11, 2016

Attendees: Jeff Bersin, Joanna Curry-Sartori, Joe Kalache, Helen Dronan, Cyndi Brown, Dave Pauluk, John Mancini, Jackie Colon, Leo Negrón

Welcome / Introductions / Approve Minutes / Early Departures / Announcements / Refreshments

Approval of January 2016 minutes. Minutes approved by voice.

Announcements:

- Joanna--- Show Paper Tigers host a screening. Great example of community that found way to connect and engage young people instead of just punish. Joanna find out how to host a screening.
- Jeff- Passed out flyer about "Sober college school of addiction studies"—online training program.
- Helen- Clinton foundation announces free Narcan training for high schools.

General Discussion

Presentation by Officer Dante Ursini (Community Relations Officer) and Officer Teeter (every day, on the street, investigations into drugs, etc.)

NOTE: See power point (attached) for details of their presentation.

Discussion followed:

- Officers discussed that a lot of drug use issues start with an injury. People get addicted to pain meds. Also an issue that senior citizens have a lot of meds in their closet. They are available and other family members find them and get addicted.
- Cost- Pills-\$ 30 - 70 per pill. Problem is that heroin is a lot less expensive
- Narcan- Opiates are depressant- so they slow breathing--- so Narcan make so can breathe again. Narcan does not have a negative effect if it is given and the person does not have heroin in their blood. Narcan is being approved for over the counter. But we know Narcan is only a temporary fix and still need medical attention or person will die.
- Usually people start with marijuana and medicine pills. People speak of Marijuana--- gateway drug. Really often starts with a pill--- e.g. a party pill- kids think it wouldn't be prescribe if it wasn't terrible. (not just pain meds but Adderal, etc.)
- Heroin- Effect - goes fast to brain. Some stigma with needles so most people are snorting. Bundle of heroin - 4 - 5 \$ a bag. Packs of 10.
- Biggest, root issue is mental health--- when responding to calls related to drugs, officers often deal with families where parents are not caring for themselves. They are not having the family intervention they need. Different services may be in place, but not integrated family support.

- Discussion about the need for comprehensive, mental health services for the family with organizations that take their insurance. Also discussed need to know what resources are available in the area for these families.
- Joanna shared that the Bridge Family Center takes all insurance including Husky. Joanna shared that Pat Tyler coordinates the West Hartford Community Network and they are compiling a list of who is involved and resources available--- Joanna will look into this further.
- Range of ages of those found using--- generally 20 - 30s range. Use variety of drugs--- may use mix of drugs, whatever can get hands on.
- Addiction- cause supplemental crimes.- often commit while high, or just don't care, then use as a defense that they were under the influence. Wealthier kids can stay off radar because get money from mom and dad. It is important that people make the criminal complaint even if it's your family.--- they need tough love for taking family money e.g. Pawning family valuables. Often not punished for supplemental crime.
- If kids put in programs for rehab, most go back.
- Hide a tokes--- clear metal pipe, looks like cigarette but has weed etc. in there.
- John M- marijuana issue because being medically produced. Can't over dose on marijuana. Alcohol is depressant.
- Helen- on average week, do you see pattern?
- Teeter-average 40 - 50 arrests per month. Also he is on community interaction team. They target hot spots, attend to issue of stolen cars, issue with kids in neighborhood, etc. He gave examples of different ways people are looking for fast cash to get drugs. There are WH officers assigned to state wide task for so they talk across towns. Generally people are getting drugs in Hartford. People say this is victimless crime--e.g. but still impact many people and also issues such as robbery.
- Jeff--- what can we do as prevention commission to make your job easier?
- Teeter- It goes back to the family. It is the responsibility of parents to be responsible for their kids actions. You can't just threaten arrest. Rather need to see more involvement from parents.
- Jeff- COC and LBE-- if we work with these two organizations to work with parents to keep kids close to them, that can make a difference.
- Teeter- Get to kids who are just starting to get involved -- that's the hardest point. Friend and parent relationships are both important. Peer support- get them into mentor program, extracurricular, etc.
- Helen- Tell kids to make parents the bad guy, "My mom just texted that I she is coming to pick me up now."

The "New Drug" (online porn addiction)- John Mancini

- John- He likes idea that 2016-2017 do something re "the new drug" (online porn addiction). This organization presents in a theatrical way and get kids engaged. If they make good first impression, then kids hear. This is a taboo subject- no one wants to bring attention to this. It thrives in secrecy. Be aware ---not shame kids who explore sexuality. The message--- there is such a significant impact early exposure to porn can have on the brain's development and we don't see it until it's too late. Kids need to know about technology and stimuli and how is brain wired so they can arm themselves and be aware. When working with people who have porn addiction, it's not about trying to eliminate the addiction---its about trying to understand how the addiction works and why it's there. If message is "this is bad"---it just feeds it.

Joanna-This is clearly a very important topic and we need to determine if taking this on for the town is within the scope of this groups mandate or are there other people in town who should be involved in looking at this issue?

New Business

There was no new business.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanna Curry-Sartori

February 12, 2016

